

June 22, 2009

**The Honorable Mayor, Members of the City Council,
and the Citizens of the City of Burien**

We are pleased to submit the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) of the City of Burien, prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, for the year ended December 31, 2008. The purpose of the report is to provide citizens, investors, grantor agencies and other interested parties with reliable financial information about the City.

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report includes all City of Burien operations and activities for which the City is financially accountable. Financial accountability is defined as appointment by the City of a voting majority of another organization's governing body and either the ability to impose its will on the other organization, or the potential for the other organization to provide specific financial benefits to or impose financial burdens on the City.

All of the funds in this report pertain to the operations of the City of Burien. There were no other organizations for which the City was financially accountable.

This Comprehensive Annual Financial Report is presented in conformity with Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement 34. The implementation of GASB 34 modified the presentation of financial information for the City of Burien effective with financial statements ending December 31, 2003. The format and purpose of these changes are addressed in greater detail in the Management Discussion and Analysis. The notes to the financial statements are also designed to discuss the changes and explain the effects and results of these changes. Discussions concerning changes in financial condition compare year end 2007 and 2008.

GAAP requires that management provide a narrative introduction, overview, and analysis to accompany the basic financial statements in the form of Management's Discussion and Analysis (MD&A). This letter of transmittal is designed to complement the MD&A and should be read in conjunction with it. The City of Burien's MD&A can be found immediately following the independent auditor's report.

Responsibility for the accuracy of the data presented and the completeness and fairness of the presentation, including disclosures, rest with City Management and the City's Finance Department. The City maintains a system of internal accounting controls to provide reasonable assurance that assets are safeguarded against loss or unauthorized use and that financial

records can be relied upon to produce financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

II. THE CITY OF BURIEN AND ITS SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC

The City of Burien was incorporated as a non-charter code city on February 28, 1993, with a Council-Manager form of government. The City is governed by an elected council of seven members, with one of the members elected by the others to serve as Mayor for a two-year term. All seven City Council positions stood for election upon incorporation in 1993 for staggered two- and four-year terms. After 1995 all terms are for a period of four years, allowing for both continuity and staggered elections.

The following City services are provided to the public, either directly or through contracts with other governmental agencies and outside vendors:

Executive Services are provided by the City Manager who is responsible for administering policies and programs established by the City Council, maintaining the official records of the City including meeting minutes, contracts, and other official business, as well as personnel administration, community information, and directing and coordinating departmental operations.

Finance Services are provided by City staff and include budget and financial statement preparation, cash management, contract management, and the management of Burien's information systems.

Legal Services are provided by a staff paralegal who coordinates our legal representation and a contract interim city attorney who serve as legal advisor to the City Council and management, and represents the City in litigation. Public prosecution, public defender and additional litigation assistance is also provided through contracted services.

Municipal Court Services are provided through a contract with King County District Court.

Police Services are provided through a contract with the King County Sheriff's Office.

Jail Services are provided through contracts with the King County Department of Adult Detention, the City of Renton and the Yakima County Department of Corrections.

Public Works are provided by City staff and through contracted services and include engineering, street maintenance, and surface water management.

Planning and Community Development are provided by City staff and include the issuance of planning and building permits and current and long range planning.

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services are provided by City staff and include recreation, arts programs, senior center operations, and parks maintenance.

Fire Services are provided by King County Fire District No. 2, which contracts with North Highline Fire District for services in the northern section of the City. The City annexed to the Fire District in 1997.

Library Services are provided by the King County Library District.

Water and Sewer Services are provided by various special purpose districts within the City.

The following schedule includes the major contracts with other governmental agencies and the 2008 expenditures reported in the financial statements relating to those entities:

• King County Sheriff's Office (police services)	\$6,661,703
• King County Public Works Department (street & signal maintenance)	760,408
• King County Public Works Department (overlay and signal controllers)	434,469
• Jail Services with Yakima County, City of Renton and King County Department of Adult Detention	578,378
• King County Surface Water Management Division	<u>525,083</u>
Total 2008 major contracts with other governmental agencies	<u>\$8,960,041</u>

III. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND OUTLOOK

Local Economy

The City of Burien, located in southwest King County, is bordered by Puget Sound on the west, SeaTac on the east, Seattle and unincorporated King County on the north, and Normandy Park on the south. The City is characterized by well-established residential neighborhoods and a central downtown business district.

The predominant character of the City is a residential suburb providing a diverse range of residential opportunities for people who are employed in the regional economy throughout King County. The City is also a significant commercial center, serving both a regional market in some sectors, such as automobile sales, and a subregional commercial center serving adjacent areas of White Center and the cities of SeaTac, Normandy Park, and Des Moines.

While historically the regional economy of Puget Sound has been dominated by the Boeing Company, there has been substantial diversification over the last several years. Computer software and related industries have been leaders in this diversification (led by Microsoft Corporation). This diversification is also related to increased activity in international trade through the Port of Seattle, and the growth of international trade related services.

The business economy of the City itself is also relatively diversified. Economic activity within Burien can best be measured in the form of revenue from taxable retail sales. The largest local economic sectors are automotive dealers and gas stations, which comprised 25% of the total sales tax revenue to the City in 2008. Auto dealers serve a regional market competing with other regional auto centers. The next largest sectors of activity reflect Burien's role as a subregional commercial center serving the residents of Burien and surrounding communities. These sectors include grocery stores, drug stores and related retail merchandise. The City has growing service centers spurred by medical and related services centered around Highline Community Hospital. The City also has significant employment in education, providing sites for the Highline School District administrative offices.

Future Economic Outlook

The economic outlook for Burien's economy, both in its role as part of the regional economy and for its local business sectors is currently following the national trend into a recession. At the regional level, Burien is well situated to recover from the this current downturn in the economy.

Much of this economic stimulus will be provided by the growth of both international trade and international services. State Route (SR) 509 provides direct access from Burien to the City of Seattle and the Port of Seattle and its supporting industrial areas in south Seattle. SR 518 provides direct access from Burien to Seattle-Tacoma International Airport and the developing industrial area in the Green River Valley to the east.

The Washington State Department of Transportation has conducted an environmental impact analysis on the possible extension of SR 509 highway (which runs north/south through Burien), west of the airport to connect with Interstate 5 (I-5). Since I-5 is the primary arterial serving the west coast, a connection with SR 509 could substantially improve accessibility between the City and the growing areas to the south. The Washington State Department of Transportation has already improved the First Avenue South Bridge at the north end of SR 509, improving access to the north.

Substantial redevelopment has occurred on key sites within the City. Highline Community Hospital is undergoing another expansion project including an emergency services facility, and the Town Square Development Area is seeing completion of the new Library/City Hall building, a large mixed use retail/condominium building, Town Square Park and a new Transit Park and Ride facility.

Local economists are forecasting a continued decrease in employment in the area in the near term, but this trend should reverse itself in late 2009 or early 2010. In the last 15 to 20 years, significant diversification has occurred in the job market in the region. This diversification has lessened the impact of past job cutbacks by Boeing on the region and should hasten the recovery when it does occur.

IV. MAJOR INITIATIVES

The following are among the City's 2008 achievements:

- Nearing completion of construction on First Avenue South and the Ambaum Regional Detention Pond expansion projects.
- Continue to study the implications of and plan for a potential annexation.
- Begin preparation for moving to the new City Hall.
- Redevelop City's website and implement web video-streaming technology.
- Develop the first biennial budget for the City.
- Continued implementation of the electronic document management project.
- Continued to negotiate impact mitigation of northeast Burien with the Port of Seattle.
- Completed construction on Seahurst Upland Restoration, Mathison Park and Jacob Ambaum Park projects.
- Begin design of 1st Ave South phase II project.

Initiatives for 2009 include the following:

- Complete construction on First Avenue South, Phase 1, and the Ambaum Regional Detention Pond expansion projects.
- Enter into regional jail facility interlocal agreement and begin site selection and financing process.
- Plan and market airport compatible redevelopment in the Northeast Redevelopment Area.
- Implement video traffic enforcement program.
- Proceed with a vote on the possible annexation of a portion of the North Highline neighborhood to the City.
- Complete Town Square Development projects and move into new City Hall.
- Plan and remodel the former library building as the new Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services facility.

V. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Accounting System & Policies and Budgetary Controls

Financial Policies: The City's financial policies include requirements that a 6 year financial plan be prepared each year, to estimate the City's ability to meet future responsibilities. The policies also provide that at year end all funds in excess of 10% of ongoing revenues in the General Fund and 5% of ongoing revenues in the Street and Surface Water Management funds fund balances are available for transfer to the capital project funds to help fund existing and future projects. The policies also provide that cable franchise fees and Seattle City Light and the garbage utility taxes are to be deposited into the Street Fund to help maintain the City's infrastructure. A provision in the financial policies directs that the City will dedicate 1% of General Fund expenditures for human service programs.

Accounting System and Policies: The City's financial statements for governmental funds (General, Special Revenue, Debt Service, and Capital Projects) have been prepared using the modified accrual basis of accounting in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. Revenues are recognized when measurable and available to finance current expenditures. Expenditures are recognized when goods and services are received or the liability is incurred. The City's proprietary fund, the Surface Water Management Fund, is accounted for on an accrual basis. Revenues on the accrual basis are recognized when earned and expenses are recognized when incurred.

Cities in the State of Washington must comply with the Budgeting, Accounting and Reporting System (BARS) prescribed by the Office of the State Auditor as authorized under Chapter 43.09 Revised Code of Washington (RCW). There are additional requirements of timely submission of annual financial reports to the state for review. The City's accounting system is structured to facilitate the effectiveness of internal accounting controls. The internal accounting controls are

designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the safeguarding of assets and the reliability of financial records.

Budgetary Controls: The City maintains budgetary controls in accordance with RCW Chapter 35A.33. The objectives of these budgetary controls are to ensure compliance with legal provisions of the budget approved by the City Council. Activities in the General Fund, Special Revenue funds, and the Debt Service funds are included in the annual appropriated budget. The level of budgetary control, at which expenditures cannot legally exceed the appropriated amount, is established at the individual fund level. Activity in the Capital Projects funds are budgeted for the length of the projects. All appropriations, except for the project-length Capital Project funds, lapse at year-end.

Long-term Financial Planning: As part of the 6 year financial plan mentioned above, all revenue and expenditures are estimated for the following six years, with excess revenue, being made available to fund future capital projects. During this process grants and other funding sources are identified and additional funding sources such as bonds or other funding options are considered.

Risk Management

Liability and property insurance for the City is purchased through the Washington Cities Insurance Authority, a pool established through the Interlocal Cooperation Act authorized by Chapter 48.62 RCW.

Employee health insurance premiums are purchased through policies administered by the Association of Washington Cities. Industrial insurance and unemployment insurance are administered by the State of Washington. The City pays premiums established by these state agencies.

Bonded Debt Management

At December 31, 2008, bonds payable total \$11,615,000, of which \$2,460,000 is from a 2002 limited tax general obligation bond issue. The debt service on these bonds will be paid over 20 years, with interest rates on this issue ranging from 2.5% to 4.7%. The remainder of bonds payable is \$9,155,000 and are from a 2006 limited tax general obligation bond issue payable over 20 years with interest rates ranging from 3.75% to 5.0%.

The ratio of net direct tax supported bonded debt to assessed valuation and population presents useful indicators of the City's relative debt burden. These ratios for the end of 2008 are as follows:

	<u>Ratio of Debt to Assessed Valuation</u>	<u>Debt Per Capita</u>
Net Direct Tax Supported Debt	0.30%	\$ 368

Cash Management

The City's policy is to invest excess cash not needed for immediate operations. At year-end the City had invested approximately \$11.8 million with the State of Washington Local Government Investment Pool. The average yield during calendar year 2008 was 2.72% with a net earnings rate of 2.68%. The investment pool provides a diversified portfolio consisting of banker's acceptances, repurchase agreements, U.S. agency securities, U.S. treasury securities and certificates of deposit. The investments are liquid and can be redeemed at short notice, and therefore are classified as cash and cash equivalents in the financial statements.

VI. INDEPENDENT AUDIT

State statute requires that an audit of the City's financial affairs be made at such reasonable periodic intervals as the State Auditor shall determine, but at least once every three years. The State Auditor performs such an audit of the City on an annual basis. The 2008 audit of all City funds has been completed and it was conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. The City has received an unqualified opinion on its 2008 financial statements.

VII. CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the City of Burien for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2007. This was the fourteenth consecutive year that the City has achieved this prestigious award. In order to be awarded a Certificate of Achievement, a government must publish an easily readable and efficiently organized Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. This report must satisfy both generally accepted accounting principles and applicable legal requirements.

A Certificate of Achievement is valid for a period of one year only. We believe that our current Comprehensive Annual Financial Report continues to meet the Certificate of Achievement Program's requirements and we are submitting it to the GFOA to determine its eligibility for another certificate.

VIII. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The preparation of this report on a timely basis could not be accomplished without the efficient and dedicated service of the entire Finance Department. We wish to express our appreciation to all other City personnel for their assistance and cooperation during the year. We also wish to thank the City Council whose interest in, and support of, the financial affairs of the City have significantly contributed to quality financial services. The assistance of the State Auditor's Office is greatly appreciated during the preparation of our Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

Respectfully submitted,

Tabatha Miller,
Finance Director

ELECTED CITY OFFICIALS**2008 City Councilmember**

Joan McGilton, Mayor
Rose Clark, Deputy Mayor
Sue Blazak
Kathy Keene
Lucy Krakowiak
Sally Nelson
Gordon Shaw

Term Ending

December 2009
December 2009
December 2009
December 2011
December 2011
December 2009
December 2011

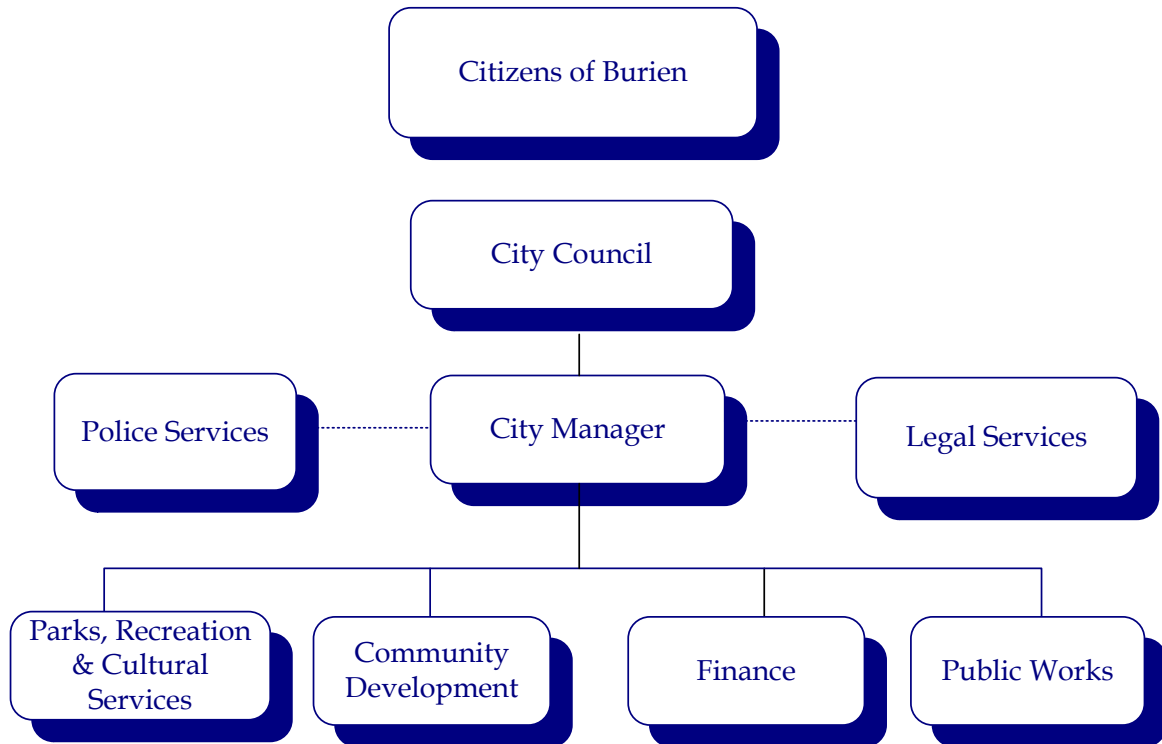
CITY ADMINISTRATION

City Manager
Finance Director
Interim Public Works Director
Community Development Director
Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Director
Chief of Police Services
Interim City Attorney

Michael Martin
Tabatha Miller
Doug Lamothe
Scott Greenberg
Michael Lafreniere
Scott Kimerer
Chris Bacha



**City of Burien, Washington
Organizational Chart**



..... Denotes contracted services